

IN THE CLAIMS

1-20. (cancelled)

21. (currently amended) An artificial intervertebral disc comprising:

a spacer body having a first exterior surface and a second exterior surface, at least one of said first exterior surface and said second exterior surface adapted for engaging a vertebral body, at least one of said first exterior surface and said second exterior surface having a ~~circular~~circumferential groove disposed therein; and

a vertebral body contact element having a convex central portion and a downwardly bent perimeter, the perimeter corresponding to the ~~circular~~circumferential groove of the at least one of said first exterior surface and said second exterior surface, wherein only said perimeter of said vertebral body contact element is disposed within said groove to thereby aid in securely attaching said vertebral body contact element to said first exterior surface or said second exterior surface; and

a coating being disposed within said groove and being in contact with said perimeter of said vertebral body contact element, said coating attaching said perimeter of said vertebral body contact element to said first or second exterior surface,

wherein the vertebral body contact element includes a wire mesh having a resting shape of a dome convexly extending from the spacer body such that a gap is formed between said central portion of said vertebral body contact element and said first or second exterior surfaces.

22. (cancelled)

23. (previously presented) The artificial intervertebral disc of claim 21, wherein the vertebral body contact element has

a convexity depth approximating a concavity depth of a concave surface of a vertebral body.

24. (previously presented) The artificial intervertebral disc of claim 21, wherein the vertebral body contact element has a footprint approximating a footprint of a concave surface of a vertebral body.

25. (previously presented) The artificial intervertebral disc of claim 21, wherein the coating is a plasma spray.

26. (previously presented) The artificial intervertebral disc of claim 21, further comprising an osteoconductive feature adjacent said wire mesh.

27. (previously presented) The artificial intervertebral disc of claim 26, wherein said coating includes said osteoconductive feature.

28. (cancelled).

29. (previously presented) The artificial intervertebral disc of claim 21, further comprising an osteoconductive feature adjacent the vertebral body contact element.

30. (previously presented) The artificial intervertebral disc of claim 29, wherein said coating includes said osteoconductive feature.

31-47. (cancelled)